

Chief, FBID

7 December 1953

Chief, Editorial Branch

Critique on Daily Report for Monday, 30 November 1953

#### FOREWORD

This issue of the Monday Daily Report was exceptional in size and inclusiveness. It consisted of 450 pages and included 456 items ("Normal:" 325 pages, with about the same number of items). Processing was spread over Friday afternoon, Sunday, and Monday morning. The finished product, prepared under such conditions, was less than ideally compact as to total wordage and suggested a surplusage of 30 to 40 pages. Since, however, there was no surplus in significant information, the deletion of these 30 or 40 pages would have been counterbalanced, under more "normal" conditions, either by current compression or by subsequent inclusion of the surplus in Tuesday's report or even later issues. The fact that the "normal" number of items was not exceeded clearly indicates that a substantial number of individual items were longer than necessary.

#### DISCUSSION

1. Selectivity: No definitely submarginal items were included in the report. That is, there were no items the deletion of which would have actually improved the presentation of the material.

2. Length of Items: On the other hand, a number of items could have been substantially shortened (given the editorial personnel and time).

3. This shortening, briefing, and/or summarizing of material takes longer than straight editing and in many cases presupposes that the copy be handled in a single mass. The process becomes difficult and sometimes impossible on long items if the material is handled over two or more days (example: Friday afternoon, Sunday, and Monday morning) or if the work is done against imminent deadlines; that is, for example, in case Tuesday's copy is being handled for Tuesday's Daily Report.

4. More leisurely handling, however, is practicable on copy which is being processed in the afternoon for the next day's report. Here is the opportunity for compression, for putting more information into the page space available than would result from straight deadline editing.

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5. Here also is the opportunity for training editorial personnel in the art of cutting and summarizing copy without sacrificing essentials. It entails the development of a skill through expert supervision and long practice.

6. Once gained, this skill will be useful in all editorial operations, especially in the field, where most Daily Report editors are headed. The subject should be especially emphasized in on-the-job training of editors, and should embrace the older hands as well as new employees.

CONCLUSIONS

7. This survey has revealed the following facts with respect to the Daily Report:

- a. Selection of items for inclusion in the Report is of a high order.
- b. Compression of material into a narrower compass, with improvement in presentation, is possible.
- c. Training of editors can be improved for over-all greater editorial effectiveness.
- d. Afternoon work has a special value in accomplishing the ends noted in "b" and "c" above.

Attachments - 3

ATTACHMENT #1

NOTES

USSR & EAST EUROPE DAILY REPORT

Roundups were all three too long. Saving of at least 2 pages could be made by skillful cutting, which should be made in London.

AA-1: Mark excerpts and omit first paragraph; AA-3: omit first and third paragraphs; AA-4: omit first paragraph.

AA-13: Mark excerpts and omit last three paragraphs on this page;

AA-14: omit first 4 paragraphs; AA-15: omit first and third paragraph;

AA-16: omit first three and next to last paragraph.

BB-3 Petropavlovsk piece could be omitted: little regional significance.

BB-32 & 33: Long briefs could be cut in half.

CC-8: WPC item could have been cut in half, saving three pages.

EE-4: Cut commentary in half.

EE-7: Gessner item could be cut in half, saving 1½ pages.

ATTACHMENT #2

NOTES (CONTINUED)

WEST EUROPE AND NEAR EAST DAILY REPORT

Free Greece looks overplayed by, say, 12 pages. But since FBID is only source for this material and since it is obviously high priority (especially with the Department of State), editorial policy must entail publication of all that available space will permit. Skillful cutting would make for compression, but should be used only when necessity dictates.

Austrian press scrutiny (14 pages beginning on page TT-3) is obviously overplayed and could be considerably slashed if necessary. Deletion of press reviews on TT-3, 4, & 5 would save 3 pages.

Italian press reviews on WW-1 & 2 could be omitted, as also the item on WW-5 on left-wing reactions to the Soviet note. It is known, however, that the Italian desk in OIR, Department of State, is especially interested in these broadcasts, and they should be carried whenever space permits.

ATTACHMENT # 3

NOTES (CONTINUED)

FAR EAST DAILY REPORT

The Mao Tun speech at the WPC, Vienna, (AAA-16) could have been cut by about one page, but, if labeled "Excerpts" instead of "Text," it would have been unsatisfactory and the saving in space unjustifiable.

Albanian Anniversary item (AAA-12) could have been briefed in 10 lines with a saving of 2 pages.

AAA-17 "Kwantung Daily Demand" could have been briefly noted as a shirt-tail to People's Daily item, saving  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pages.

AAA-26 "Construction Association Greets Mao" could have been briefed in 10 lines, saving  $\frac{1}{2}$  page. (Saving in AAA, 4 pages.)

CCC-4: Catholic item looks long, but is of so high a priority that the wisdom of deletions is dubious.

EEE-2 through 6: Speeches by Hong Ki Chu and Choe Chang Ik could have been processed in brief notes if the Kim Il Sung speech (EEE-7) had been in hand at the time. But it was not.

EEE-12 to 14: "Mass Meeting Sends Letter to Chinese:" This important document would have been useless except in full text.